



News from Livingston County, NY

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Livingston County Department of Health ***Our Protocols amid the COVID-19 Crisis***

Mount Morris, NY, April 3, 2020 — As the COVID-19 crisis continues, the Livingston County Department of Health (LCDOH) would like to share with community members an overview of its system as it relates to this public health emergency.

We are vigilant in our protocols to isolate COVID-19, quarantine those who are possible carriers, and slow the spread of the virus through tried and true public health mitigation strategies. All LCDOH protocols closely align with New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) guidance.

COVID-19 Test Recommended if Symptomatic

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, LCDOH urges you to first call your medical provider. Your provider knows your medical history and can provide guidance and testing if needed.

Medical providers and hospitals can test you for COVID-19. LCDOH does not issue, authorize or conduct testing.

Quarantine once Tested

LCDOH follows any pending COVID-19 cases or confirmed positive tests for the virus. A pending case is one in which a patient who has symptoms is awaiting test results.

If you get tested for COVID-19, LCDOH is notified and will place you under quarantine until the test results come back. You will be instructed to not leave your home as you should not be exposing others. Test results may take days to come back.

Quarantine for Positive Case

LCDOH is notified of your test results. If the test results are positive, a LCDOH nurse will contact you and get information on where you were and people you could have exposed when

symptomatic. You will remain under quarantine until you are seven days without symptoms and not using fever reducing medication.

Contact Investigation of Positive Case

LCDOH will immediately begin to trace any close contacts of yours as part of what is called a communicable disease investigation. This includes tracking your whereabouts prior to symptoms beginning. LCDOH focuses on: (a) the people you have been in contact with – especially those who have been less than six feet away for more than five minutes, and (b) the places where you have been.

Part of the LCDOH investigation includes a risk assessment based on the extent of your interactions with others and the knowledge that COVID-19 primarily spreads through respiratory droplets. If you live, work closely, or share meals with someone, that individual is more likely at risk for exposure than, for example, someone who simply walks by you in a store or touches the same piece of paper.

Potential Exposure Alert

If the investigation uncovers close contact, a potential exposure alert will be issued and distributed to media outlets. The alert – in the form of a press release – includes known places you visited. The dates and locations listed in the release are important as they are the only identified exposure concerns at the time, with an exposure defined as less than six feet away for more than five minutes. Your name is not released out of respect for both you and privacy laws.

Anyone identifying as a potential exposure based on information in the release should immediately call LCDOH at 1-877-280-6775 for instructions.

Exposed Individuals

Known individuals who could have been exposed (were in close contact with you while you were symptomatic) will be contacted by LCDOH and placed under quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure. These individuals must remain at home to stop the spread of COVID-19.

LCDOH will check in daily with exposed individuals for symptoms. Those who do not present symptoms are not recommended for COVID-19 testing due to concerns over “false negative” results from testing too early. In addition, individuals cannot be tested daily due to the limited number of testing kits.

If exposed individuals become symptomatic (fever, cough, trouble breathing) during quarantine, they are urged to contact their healthcare provider for instructions. Providers will give instructions on how to manage symptoms or where to go for testing. If testing is recommended, a patient must wear a mask and call ahead to let the medical provider or

hospital know of symptoms. LCDOH will let exposed individuals know when they can come out of quarantine.

Recovered Positive Case

After you, as a positive case, have remained symptom-free for 7 consecutive days from the initial onset of symptoms – without the use of fever-reducing medication – you are considered to be recovered under NYSDOH guidance.

LCDOH will let you know when you can come out of quarantine.

“Please remember that COVID-19 cannot move on its own,” states Jennifer Rodriguez, Livingston County Public Health Director. “Do your part and stay home, except for essential travel and work or physical exercise. Avoid any non-essential trips to the store and any social gatherings period. Gatherings of any size are prohibited by Governor Cuomo's Executive Order. Being a responsible citizen involves protecting yourself and your neighbors by adhering to these directives.”

If you have a fever, cough or trouble breathing, please call your health care provider for an assessment of your symptoms. If you feel as though you may have had exposure to COVID-19, please call LCDOH at 585-243-7270. Call 1-877-280-6775 if you would like general information on COVID-19 or to learn how to volunteer. Livingston County Mental Health has created a help line for community members who need someone to talk to during these stressful times. This is a free and confidential service. Please call 585-243-7251, Monday – Friday from 9:00AM – 5:00PM.

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